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Letter dated 18 November 1998 from the Chairman of the Fifth Committee addressed to the President of the General Assembly

As a result of the concerns expressed by the Fifth Committee at its 29th meeting held this morning regarding the tendency of the Main Committees of the General Assembly to consider budgetary matters that do not fall within their purview, the Fifth Committee has asked me to bring to your attention this matter, and through you to the Chairmen of the Main Committees of the General Assembly, the provisions of the following relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly as well as the relevant rules of procedure of the Assembly regarding the competence of the Fifth Committee in administrative and budgetary matters.

In section VI of its resolution 45/248 B of 21 December 1990, which deals with procedures for administrative and budgetary matters, the General Assembly:

1. Reaffirmed that the Fifth Committee was the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters;

2. Reaffirmed also the role of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;

3. Expressed its concern at the tendency of its substantive Committees and other intergovernmental bodies to involve themselves in administrative and budgetary matters;

4. Invited the Secretary-General to provide all intergovernmental bodies with the required information regarding procedures for administrative and budgetary matters.

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May I also draw your attention to the most recent resolution of the General Assembly on the subject, namely, resolution 52/22 of 22 December 1997 on questions relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998–1999, the third preambular paragraph of which states:

> "*Recalling also* its resolution 45/248 B of 21 December 1990, in which it reaffirmed that the Fifth Committee is the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters, ...".

In addition, rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly states:

> "No resolution involving expenditure shall be recommended by a committee for approval by the General Assembly unless it is accompanied by an estimate of expenditures prepared by the Secretary-General. No resolution in respect of which expenditures are anticipated by the Secretary-General shall be voted by the General Assembly until the Administrative and Budgetary Committee (Fifth Committee) has had an opportunity of stating the effect of the proposal upon the budget estimates of the United Nations."

I should be most grateful if you would give this matter your urgent attention.

(*Signed*) Movses **Abelian**
Chairman
Fifth Committee of the General Assembly